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Alcorn A. & M. College reports

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Report of the Trustees and Faculty of the Alcorn A. & M. College, to the Legislature of Mississippi, <1884-'85>-1886-'87

Biennial report of the Trustees and Faculty of the Alcorn A. & M. College to the Legislature of Mississippi, 1888 and 1889

Biennial report of the Trustees, President and other officers of the Alcorn A. & M. College, Rodney, Mississippi, 1890 and 1891

Biennial report of the Trustees, President and officers of Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, Near Westside, Miss., <1892 and 1893>

ALCORN A. & M. COLLEGE.

REPORT

OF THE

TRUSTEES AND FACULTY

OF THE

Alcorn A. & M. College,

TO THE

LEGISLATURE OF MISSISSIPPI,

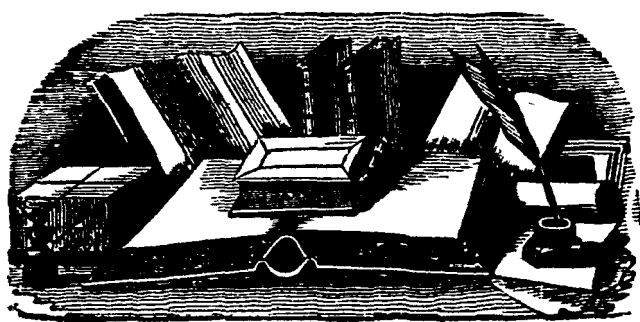
FOR THE YEARS 1884-'85.

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JACKSON, MISS. :

J. L. POWER, STATE PRINTER.

1885.



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES.

To the Governor, Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi:

I have the honor herewith to transmit the reports of the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, and of the President of Alcorn A. and M. College for the years 1884 and 1885, together with reports of Professors and Teachers in charge of departments for year ending December 1st, 1885.

W. B. MURDOCK,

PRESIDENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

DECEMBER 8TH, 1885.

REPORT OF SECRETARY.

Mr. W. B. Murdock, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Alcorn A. and M. College:

DEAR SIR: I herewith present for your inspection, in addition to the itemized account, already presented, a general summary of the expenditures of funds appropriated from the State Treasury to the support of Alcorn A. and M. College, for the years 1884 and 1885.

The total amount expended of the current fund for 1884, was \$9,384.73; of which amount \$6,336.00 was for salaries; \$1,922.84 for student labor, on farm and campus; \$1,125.89 for implements, material for farm use, school supplies, etc., leaving a balance unexpended of the amount appropriated for this year of \$1,615.27.

During 1885, there was expended for salaries to date December 8th, \$6,303.00. For student labor, \$1,934.23. For implements, school supplies, etc., \$1,304.30, leaving a present balance of \$1,458.47.

Of the sum of \$10,000.00 appropriated for repairs, changes to buildings, etc., \$5,473.96½ were expended during 1884, and \$4,420.95 to date December 8th, 1885, chiefly in repairing, painting and plastering buildings, making new and repairing old cisterns, in changing one of the literary halls into a dormitory, so as to afford the necessary accommodations to the increasing number of students.

The appropriation of \$1,000.00 to be expended in forming the nucleus of a library, has been judiciously used in the purchase of useful books and maps, of which a list will doubtless be furnished by the Librarian.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES N. BECK,
Secretary of the Board.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT.

To the Board of Trustees of Alcorn A. and M. College:

The undersigned has the honor of submitting this his third annual report, setting forth the purchases and repairs made and done since his connection with the College, September 18th, 1883,

and the general working thereof during the year beginning December 1st, 1884, and ending December 1st, 1885.

Within the time alluded to, the Boarding Hall has been provided with a suitable Charter Oak range and some stationary laundry tubs ; the recitation rooms have been supplied with 30 school desks, and some much needed recitation settees, and also 11 wall maps, a geographical globe, a lunar tellurian, a brass orrery, and a small \$30 chemical set ; two dozen chairs for use of recitation rooms, chapel, library and office, and an office secretary ; two stoves for use of Adelphic Hall, and one for library ; an oil burning scioptican for lecture room illustrations, have been purchased, besides the library has received a greatly needed accession of books by the judicious expenditure of the last Legislature's donation for that purpose. During the same time, besides re-building two large cisterns, several have been repaired, two dilapidated cottages rebuilt and two rooms added to one of them to render it large enough to accommodate the laundry help ; considerable repairing has been done on the Chapel, east of the three Dormitories and several other buildings on the grounds in addition to the painting made necessary by repairs, and to the fact that one of the Professors' cottages, and the President's house had to be partially recovered, while Belle Lettre Hall and Adelphic Hall had to be entirely recovered and otherwise repaired, and the latter fitted up as a Dormitory with fifteen rooms to accommodate the increased attendance.

These are the principal repairs and purchases made, but many minor ones serve to add in the aggregate materially to the general equipment of the College for the educational work allotted to her. As an excellent means of advertising, two engravings have been made, one of the entire campus for use of the catalogues, and a smaller one of the Chapel for use of envelopes.

For an account of the changes, improvements, character of crops raised, and needs of the farm, I invite your careful consideration of the report of the Superintendent of that important part of our work.

I here state that we bought five sheep and about ten pigs in connection with the Boarding Hall to consume the waste of the establishment and of the farm, and to help us make board to the students so low as \$6.50 per month. These sheep and hogs are apparently thriving and multiplying.

I am moved, however, to say in passing, that our greatest difficulty in this department is to find as much work for our students as they are desirous of doing, and in the further fact that owing to a lack of sufficient teaching force the work done cannot be made as completely instructive as the character of the school makes it very desirable it should be.

The Superintendent of the farm assures me the students in his agricultural classes, and those working on the farm under his directions, manifest increasing desire to learn more about improved methods of farming, and this it seems to me, while

only as it should be, is nevertheless quite a source of encouragement not only to the teachers, but should be also to the State that provides the means that the teaching may be done.

From the Librarian's report it will be seen that the students have made commendable beginning in the use of the library recently fitted up and opened to them.

During the year, besides the class in rhetoricals which comes every Friday afternoon, I have taught classes in chemistry, logic, civil government, physical geography and reading, usually four classes a day, and am now teaching as follows:

Class.	No. of students in class.
English History.....	3
"C." Intermediate Arithmetic.....	8
Manual of Geography.....	39
"C." Graded lessons in English.....	33

Add to this teaching the fact that the duty of providing for the Boarding Hall, the examination of all students for assignment to classes, keeping accounts with all students, and all College correspondence devolve upon me, besides the many other responsibilities resting upon the executive officer of an institution like this, and you will have an amount of work too various and taxing for any person to perform well, and too onerous for any one man to live long to try to do.

The classes taught by me last spring made commendable progress, and so has the English History class now being taught, while the others taught this fall have been hindered in their advancement by the constant dropping in of new recruits.

They have begun, however, to understand how to get a lesson and are consequently gradually improving.

I invite attention to the reports of my associate teachers for a detailed statement of the work done by each and the progress of students in classes reciting to each teacher. It will be seen from these reports that the *morale* of the College is steadily advancing and the scholarly ideas of the students rapidly toning up.

As it in some measure may indicate the quality of the work done by teachers and students, I may here refer to the fact that at the Colored State Fair held in Jackson during the last week of October, the special premium by Mr. Iler, in the shape of a calendar clock, valued at \$15.00, for the best display of school work by any one school in the State, was awarded to Alcorn A. & M. College; Judges J. M. Arnold and T. E. Cooper, of the State Supreme Court, and Ex-U. S. Senator B. K. Bruce being the judges in that department.

Our distinguished Governor, when opening the late Colored State Fair at Jackson very justly remarked that Mississippi is the only State in which there is an agricultural college officered by colored men and fairly supported by the State for the education of her colored citizens. We who teach have an ambition that each recurring year may

witness such marked improvement on the part of this College and her students that the State may have constantly increasing cause of pride in having the honor of being the only State in the Union that liberally fosters an agricultural and mechanical college for the higher instruction of that class of her citizens. That this hope may be realized, it will be necessary that enough money be appropriated to provide additional accommodations, apparatus and teachers, as the increased number and advancement of the students may show to be necessary.

The attendance in 1882-'3 was 113; that of 1883-'4 was 141, while that of 1884-'5 was 211. The enrollment this fall has been 145, and it is expected the attendance for the year will be at least as great as the year previous; and yet the increased number does not so clearly point out the need of an additional teacher as does the actual advancement in scholarship and consequent enlargement of the number of classes to be taught.

Four young men were graduated from one course in June, 1884, and one in June, 1885. Two of these are now farming and teaching; one is preaching and teaching; another is teaching, and the other one is an agent in the mercantile business.

There are two candidates in the class of 1886, and seven regular and four irregular members of the class of 1887. This last class shows an encouraging development of superior striking qualities on the part of our advanced students.

Except some painting, to be done by students as soon as convenient, our buildings are all in fair condition, though many of them show the effects of age enough to make it necessary to keep repairing a little every now and then to prevent greater damage.

Owing to a fear that our money was about to give out, the black-boards needed have not been purchased, nor the surveyor's transit, barometer, lunar telescope, nor iron safe. Should a fire occur, all our records, accounts and cash might be destroyed, as at present we have no safe to receive them.

If our attendance increases as much in the next two years as it has in the past two, it may become necessary to convert Belle Lettre Hall into a dormitory or otherwise provide additional accommodations before the Legislature of 1886 meets. Then the wood supply on our grounds is about exhausted, and wood or coal for College use will likely have to be bought ere then.

These things are the wants of the farm as mentioned in the report of the Superintendent thereof, together with the need of an addition to our present corps of five instructors, make it very clear to me that the sum of \$28,000.00 will be required to properly run the College during the next two years and provide for the probable demand for more room within that period.

You ought to be enabled to set apart as much as \$100.00 per annum to be used in the purchase of other books for the Library as time and progress might point out the books needed, and otherwise to provide for the efficient working of the College, as hereinbefore mentioned.

As I believe it will require the above sum to do this, I therefore respectfully recommend that the Legislature set apart for the use of the College for the next two years that amount.

J. H. BURRUS, President.

DECEMBER 8, 1885.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF THE FARM.

RODNEY, MISS., December 8, 1885.

To the President and Board of Trustees of Alcorn University :

SIRS: I have the honor to submit the following report of the Farm for the past year:

We have under cultivation about ninety acres. About ten acres were planted in oats last winter—a part in the early part of December, and the rest the last of January. The first was injured by the severe cold, but all headed well. We saved 3,500 bundles of corn for fodder and other hay sufficient to winter our stock. I manured and planted an acre, where we had early Irish potatoes, in German millet, which came up and headed heavily, but about the time it was ready for cutting the rain set in and continued until it fell down and was ruined. The Irish potato crop failed, which seems to have been quite generally the case in this section.

We gathered this fall 500 bushels of sweet potatoes; twelve two-horse wagon loads of pumpkins; some 75 bushels of cow and speckle peas, which are still in the dry hull; and 1,500 bushels of corn.

We raised in the garden enough early vegetables to supply the refectory to the close of school in June, and had a quantity of cabbage at the opening of the Fall Term. We also made a good quantity of turnips.

I planted a half acre in sorghum cane to feed green to the stock. I also find it makes good feed dried.

I planted a poor hill last spring in speckle peas, and plowed the vines in this fall, and to prevent the land from washing I planted rye. So we have about nine acres in rye, and about the same number in oats.

When I took charge of the farm three years ago, I found the land in rather poor condition, and it has been my chief aim all along to bring up the land by deep plowing, and for this a sub-soil plow was purchased, plowing in pea vines and litter, rotation of crops, and applying such manures as could be saved about the farm and grounds, thus giving the students an illustration of how a farm may be improved without the use of large quantities of expensive fertilizers, for our students coming mostly from a tenant class will not be in a condition, for some time at least, to apply the principles of high fertilizing, but no farmer is too humble for the above.

The soil has very much improved under this treatment, but still there is yet room for large improvement.

I am now endeavoring to fill up washes, improve the fences, etc., aiming to make our farm a model farm for those coming here for instruction.

We are still planting trees on the campus to take the place of the old ones, which are fast dying out. This, too, gives the students a practical lesson in tree planting.

You would be surprised to know how few of the students know anything about gardening, and my other duties will not permit me to give much time to this feature of our work.

I am endeavoring as far as possible, and my ability will permit me, to give the students, out of the schoolroom, a practical idea of farming according to the times. And to do this, we ought to add improved appliances as fast as the needs require and the means will permit. This would acquaint them with the management and care of such tools. My experience leads me to believe that not one in ten in this section know how to handle even a mowing blade. We could make good use of a mowing machine and a horse rake now.

We have so much hauling in connection with the College, being situated, as we are, away from the river and railroad, and even from our nearest town, that I would most respectfully urge the purchase of at least another good mule. I would also recommend the purchase of an improved male to put with our cows.

From the looks of our wagons, which have been in service now for a number of years, I am afraid we shall be in need of a new wagon before the end of two years.

It will be necessary to continue to replace the decayed posts and planks in the fence.

If we had a small bellows and set of blacksmith tools, I think they would be helpful. All the ordinary repairing about the farm and College buildings is done by the students.

We were fortunate enough to get our winter's wood from Mr. Henry Watson for the taking of it off some bottoms adjoining the College ground. This gives our young timber a longer time to grow.

The following is a list of the stock and tools belonging to the College :

	In good condition.	In medi- um condition.
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Mules.....	6	
Cows.....	6	
Yearlings.....	6	
Calves.....	2	
Wagons.....		3
Cart.....		1
Common field plows.....	5	3
Subsoil with sweet potato point add'l.	1	
Cultivators.....	2	

	In good condition.	In medi- um condition.
Harrows.....		2
Revolving coulter.....	1	
Wheelbarrows.....	1	3
Field hoes.....	18	13
Shovels.....	5	
Spades.....	3	2
Mattocks.....	3	
Picks.....	1	
Hole digger.....	1	1
Hay forks.....	2	1
Garden rakes.....		2
Garden hoe.....	1	
Cane hoes.....	4	
Cradles.....	1	1
Mowing blades.....	2	2
Axes.....	11	8
Cross-cut saws.....	1	1
Shears.....	1	
Wedges.....	4	1
Maul rings, sets.....	3	
Double-trees.....	3	1
Single-trees.....	8	
Grindstone.....	1	
Large files.....	4	
Mason's trowels.....	2	
One small set of carpenter's tools.....		
Gun.....		1
Saddle.....		1
Wagon gear, sets.....	2	2
Cart gear, sets.....	1	
Plow gear, sets.....	6	
Pea sacks.....	35	
Water dippers.....	3	
Large rope, 30 feet.		

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. D. BURRUS, Supt. of Farm.

REPORT OF PROF. MATHEMATICS AND AGRICULTURE.

J. H. Burrus, A. M., President Alcorn A. & M. College.

SIR: In response to your request, I have the honor to submit the following report of the Department of Mathematics and Agriculture, or rather the classes I have taught during the past year: I feel somewhat embarrassed in attempting such a report, for my teaching has covered so many subjects—being five classes daily.

I here give the enrollment in the following classes, with the subjects taught :

First Class, 2.	{	Conic Sections.
		Trigonometry.
		Mensuration.
		Surveying with Compass.
Second Class, 12.	{	Higher Algebra.
		Geometry.
		Geology.
Third Class, 14.	{	Higher Algebra.
		Elements of Agriculture.
		Geometry.
		Zoology.

The Department of Mathematics is partially supplied with models and instruments.

The progress of the classes has been quite satisfactory. The young men have shown a disposition to investigate the subjects taught, beyond the text books, which is always a source of pleasure to the teacher, although they may ask questions which he himself cannot answer. But it gives him an opportunity to send or take them to the library, where they are made acquainted with books and their uses.

Our increased facility for teaching has been of great help to me, and a few more things would also prove highly serviceable.

I think I see a much greater desire on the part of our pupils to pursue a full course of study, and thus the better fit themselves for the duties of citizenship. Much of this I think is due to the increased facilities we have for imparting instruction.

There is an increased interest and appreciation in the study of agriculture and all that pertains to the farm. All the pupils, from the most advanced to the lowest, take part with cheerfulness in the work of the farm ; in fact, all the work is done by the students.

My duties in the school-room prevent me from giving as much attention to teaching and illustrating practical farming as I should like.

The deportment of the young men, coming under my observation, has been commendable.

Respectfully submitted,

J. D. BURRUS.

RODNEY, MISS., December 5, 1885.

REPORT OF LIBRARIAN.

J. H. Burrus, President Alcorn A. & M. College :

DEAR SIR: The following is a correct report of the work done by me from December 1, 1884, to December 1, 1885:

CLASS.	NO. IN CLASS.	CLASS.	NO. IN CLASS.
Fourth Reader.....	34	Arithmetic, C	18
Sixth Reader	20	Spelling, A.....	40
Grammar; A.....	23	Botany.....	16
Man'l Geography.....	65	Drawing.....	14
Physiology.....	26	Geography, B	25
Arithmetic, E	13	Physical Geography.....	33
Grammar, B.....	16	Vocal Music.....	97

I feel that on the whole my classes have made commendable progress. The financial condition of the students is a serious drawback to them.

In addition to the work of teaching six classes daily (seven alternate days) I have had charge of the library. The books have all been rearranged and catalogued. The library has been open to students only eight weeks—yet 205 books have already been drawn, read and returned. This shows that the students are fast becoming readers of useful books. We have in the library 1357 bound books.

Very respectfully submitted,

N. H. ENSLEY,
Teacher and Librarian.

REPORTS OF TEACHERS,

President J. H. Burrus :

The following is my report for the year, beginning December 1, 1884, and ending December 1, 1885 :

I have had under my instruction six classes daily, embracing the study of Reading, Grammar, Composition, Mathematics and History.

The difficult subject of reading has been more difficult owing to the previous incorrect training of most of those who have been under me, it being always more difficult to unteach than to teach. Special attention has been given to pronunciation, articulation, punctuation, inflection and emphasis, in all of which I am pleased to report great progress, as may be readily observed by hearing the older members of the class read in contrast with those who have recently joined. At present I have a class of thirty members in McGuffey's Sixth Reader.

A class in Reed & Kellogg's Cipher Lessons in English completed the book last commencement, and began the study of composition, which they are now pursuing. As much practical work as possible is done outside the text in order the more firmly to impress the rules and principles there learned. The class now numbers eighteen.

During the year one class has completed Ray's Elementary Algebra under my instruction; another class of twenty-two is now

pursuing the study, having begun it in September. I have also had a class in White's Complete Arithmetic during the year. The class numbers twenty-seven and is still pursuing the study. A set of wall maps, an encyclopedia, and other valuable books of reference, purchased during the year, have greatly increased the interest and benefit of my classes in history. Much time and special attention are given to the history of the United States in order that the student may become very familiar with the important events of his own country. The present class numbers twenty-two.

During the most of the year I have also had a class in outlines of the World's History; there are now eight members in this class.

In addition to these I have had a class in Penmanship, composed of nearly one half the school, meeting bi-weekly; and also a class in Rhetoricals, one of four classes meeting once a week. In this class the students are practiced and drilled in essay writing, reciting, declaiming and gesticulation.

The work of the year has been satisfactory, and the various improvements and additions in the way of necessary helps make me hopeful of still larger results in the coming year.

Respectfully,

F. F. SUBLETT.

ALCORN A. & M. COLLEGE, }
RODNEY, MISS. }

President J. H. Burrus:

The following is a report of the classes taught by me during the year beginning January 3, 1885, and ending December 1, 1885:

I have had under my instruction six daily classes, viz: White's Intermediate Arithmetic, White's Complete Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Reading and Spelling. A Writing class meeting bi-weekly, a Rhetorical class meeting weekly, and a Brass band meeting tri-weekly.

The class in the Intermediate Arithmetic has completed fractions and the work has been satisfactory. In this class the inductive method has been strictly adhered to and with the best results. The class numbers thirty. The class in White's Complete Arithmetic has finished denominate numbers and passed a satisfactory examination.

Examinations have been held at stated periods. This class has enrolled twenty-four members. In the class in geography, much stress is placed on the geography of our own country, and especially our own State. Map drawing has been introduced and is an excellent help to the study. This class has enrolled twenty-nine members. The class in grammar has completed and reviewed the first fifty lessons of "Reed and Kellogg's Higher Lessons in English." The chief work of the class has been diagraming; but the art of composition and the correct use of language have not

been neglected. Friendly criticism has been allowed and has proved a valuable stimulus to careful expression. This class numbers thirty-eight.

The class in the Fourth Reader (the lowest allowed) has many drawbacks. In a majority of cases, the former teaching of those who come to us at this stage of advancement, has been very imperfect, consequently much drill on the elementary principles is necessitated. The progress of this class is necessarily slow. It numbers twenty-seven.

The class in Spelling has been drilled in oral and written spelling, the rules of spelling, etc. This class number forty-four. The class in writing is taught the principles of writing, arm movements, etc. The class includes all the lower grades. The special aim in this class is to teach the correct holding of the pen, and legibility. The members of the class in Rhetoricals, present declamations, essays, abstracts and select reading, tri-weekly. The aim in this class is to beget in the students the habits of correct expression and the art of declamation.

The Brass Band began the study of notes in January, 1885. The progress has been rapid. The members have been earnest and diligent. Pieces of some difficulty have been performed. A part of the music of our last commencement was furnished by the band. It now consists of thirteen pieces.

Respectfully submitted,

J. C. McADAMS.